

5/27/76

BCP39

STATEMENT

*Classified  
Attachment*

May 27, 1976

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I Elida Beatriz Messina make this statement to George S. Beckett, who has identified himself to me as a Security Officer with the U.S. Department of State. This statement is made of my own free will and accord without the promise of reward, coercion, unlawful inducement, or threat.

On Monday May 24, three men came to my house at <sup>5</sup>at about 11:30 p.m.. They were armed and said they belonged to the Army. They showed me the national shield of Argentina which made me believe they were Army people. The national shield was not accompanied by written credentials. They asked me where Beatrice Casoy was and I told them that she was in England. One of the men stood beside me and began questioning me about my relationship with this girl and with her younger brother, Jorge Casoy. I told them that I had met Beatrice Casoy when she was applying for a grant from the British Council which must have been in 1969-1970 at the time I was working with Mr. Aldo Blanco and we became friends at that time. While she was in England, I had power of attorney for her so that I could collect her salaries from the Instituto de Linguas Vivas and the School of Engineering. However, as I was working at the time and did not have enough time to do everything, her brother Jorge would come with me and collect the money and he would take care of transferring the money to her in England. They (the three men) asked me when I had last seen Jorge Casoy. I told them the last time I saw this man was when he was boasting at his sister's apartment that he had crossed the Matanza River (near Ezeiza Airport) to see Juan Peron. I told him that I thought he was a fool because he didn't realize Peron was a wolf in sheep's skin and that he was stupid if he thought Peron wanted to do any good for the country. I have not seen him again since then. Then, the man asked me why I was Elida de May and I told him it was because I had been married to Federico May but since we had legally separated I had stopped using his name. Meanwhile the other two men were searching my apartment. One of them stood with my son watching TV. They never molested my son, never told him anything. One of the men took me to the kitchen and put his hand on my chest and said that I was very

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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☒ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s): B6

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☐ In Full

☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to

Date ☐ Declassify on ☐ Reason ☐

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quiet -- he was surprised. I told him that if he really was an Army officer I had nothing to fear, nothing to hide. I was then blindfolded and told that I had to go with them. I asked them to call my mother so that she could come over (and take care of my son) and they took me to a car. There were four people in the car. I don't know where I was taken and was kept blindfolded for 48 hours.

When I arrived at our destination I was asked my name, address, who I was living with, where Beatrice Casoy was, and what my relationship with the Casoy was. I repeated what I had told them at home. After this, I was taken along several corridors to a place where there was a sponge rubber pad where I could lie down. Somebody brought a blanket and about every hour or hour and a half, somebody would come into the room, which seemed to be heavily locked, and ask me why I was there and if there was anything I wanted. They would offer food and water at regular intervals. I only had to knock on the door and somebody would come and take me to the bathroom, blindfolded. At no time during my stay was I mistreated, tortured or anything like that.

May 26. I was taken along corridors, etc, and into a room where there seemed to be several men. Two of them questioned me -- one after the other -- always the same questions, to which I gave the same answers. Additionally, I told them I had lost contact with Beatrice Casoy almost immediately after she started working for Oxford University Press.

I was asked my opinion of the life of Beatrice Casoy and I said that I couldn't really give any because I had not seen her for the last two years. I also told them that I knew she was supposed to be back from England around June 1 because she is scheduled to give some lectures for the Association of Teachers of English in Buenos Aires. I told them that as a lecturer, she is excellent. Then, I was taken back to the place where I was detained and, some hours later, I was questioned again by somebody else -- the voice was different. The same questions were asked and I gave the same replies. A few hours later, I was again questioned but in a different tone -- in a more serious tone -- with more authority. This person said that my ex-husband was connected with the Casoy's in some kind of discussion group. This was a surprise to me and I reacted to the question. I told the man that if this was the case, I wanted to be certain because, if true, I would try to avoid having my son see his father any more.

I was again taken back to my place of detention. Somebody came while I was lying on the foam rubber pad on the floor and I told this man I was very much afraid. I wasn't afraid because of anything they had done to me. This person told me I should relax because there was nothing they could do to me and that I had to be taken somewhere else to make a statement. Then, a short time later, two people came and led me to a motor conveyance which had two young men in it. Somebody who sat beside me said he was a soldier. He offered me a

cigarette and gave me some money to take a cab home. He asked me my name and I told him. He then asked me if I had relatives in Villa Urquiza, in Villa Pueyrredón, and in Martínz and I told him I did. He stated in a shocked manner that he was speechless because we must be cousins. He said they would leave us off on Pampa Street near my home and that after leaving the vehicle, we were to lie down on the ground, still blindfolded, and count slowly to 100. Since I could not get a cab, I took a bus to my mother's residence. It was only then, that I was told by everybody that the people that came to take me away had been to my mother's house first -- this is how they got my address. Then my parents explained to me what had happened at their home and that they had come to her place to ask for me. This was when I learned that my mother had picked up my son because of their instructions.

I went to my apartment on [ ] during the morning of May 27. The apartment was in great disarray reflecting that a very thorough search had been conducted. However, upon examining the contents of the apartment I found that nothing was destroyed or missing. In addition, I subsequently found out that the individuals who abducted me found some money and gave it to my son to keep. Bk

I have read this statement consisting of three pages and it is true and correct.

Subscribed and sworn to before me

this 28 day of May, 1976

George S. Beckett  
Security Officer  
Department of State

Witnesses:

Hugh M. Woodward  
~~Public Affairs Officer - USIS~~

Charles R. Meyer  
Cultural Affairs Officer - USIS